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STUDIES IN THE JEWISH LITURGY.

II. עבר לפני התיבה.

A.

THE technical expression for the second act of the daily congregational prayer is, as can be seen from the previously quoted passage of *Mishna Megilla*, IV, עבר לפני התיבה. The simple meaning of the phrase is quite clear; it signifies the rising from one's seat and the stepping up to the "Teba," the ark containing the rolls of the Law, in order to recite the prayers. But as to the extent and precise nature of this office there has been misapprehension for a thousand years, in fact ever since Western scholars began to study the Jewish Liturgy; and this misunderstanding of the expression has rendered impossible the correct comprehension of the entire liturgical terminology contained in our old sources.

The term is of frequent occurrence in the Mishna: *Berakhot*, V, 3: העובר לפני התיבה ומעה; *ibid.*, V, 4: העובר לפני; *Erubin*, III, 9: לפני התיבה לא יענה אחר הכהנים אמן; *Rosh ha-Shana*, IV, 7: העובר לפני התיבה ביום טוב הראשון של ראש השנה אומ' החליצנו . . . העובר לפני התיבה ביום טוב האחרון של חג; *Taanit*, I, 2: מתקיע מעשה . . . שעבר אחד לפני התיבה וגמר את הברכה כלה; *ibid.*, II, 5: אין עוברין לפני התיבה . . . פחות; *Megilla*, IV, 3: ולא ענו אחריו אמן; *ibid.*, IV, 5: מעשרה; *ibid.*, IV, 6: קטן . . . אינו עובר לפני התיבה . . . פוחח . . . ואינו עובר; *ibid.*, IV, 8: האומר איני עובר לפני התיבה.

In Babylon it was customary to posit the ark a trifle deeper than the floor of the synagogue, so that it was

necessary to descend a step to it¹. The technical expression for the act in that country was, therefore, *יִרְדּוּ* לפני החיבה. In the course of time this phrase passed over even into several passages of some editions of the Mishna. Thus, e.g., we read, *passim*, in *Taanit*, II, 2: *עמדו בתפלה מורידין לפני* ; החיבה, and in the passage already cited, *Megilla*, IV, 5, 6, in some of the editions, *והוא יורד . . . אינו יורד*. In the *Tosefta*, the term *יִרְדּוּ* predominates², and it is likewise of very frequent occurrence in the Baraitot of the Babylonian Talmud; but the meaning is always precisely the same. That the change in the wording here is merely occasioned by the difference of local conditions, and that it is useless to seek for a difference in meaning, becomes perfectly clear by comparing parallel passages in several of our old sources. To almost all of the passages in which *יִרְדּוּ* occurs, parallel passages can be found in which *עבר* is used³. In the Palestinian Talmud, *עבר* is invariably used. Where the context permits it, the designation of the place is omitted; both verbs are then used very pithily: e.g. *Shabbat*, 24 b: *אין שלח צבור יורד ערבית ביום טוב*; *Jer. Taan.*, II, 2 (65 c): *מעבירין כל מה שירצו*. Finally it is to be noted that in Babylon *יִרְדּוּ* was occasionally displaced by its Aramaic equivalent *נחית*; cf. *Ber.*, 33 b (*Meg.*, 25 a): *ההוא נחית קמיה*; *Yoma*, 36 b: *ההוא נחית קמיה דר' חנינא*; *ibid.*, 56 b: *ההוא נחית קמיה דרבא*.

In Palestine the Aramaic formula was *אחי עבר חד קומי* *עאל חזא ואטרה*, *חיבותא* (*Jer. Ber.*, V, 4 (9 c)); and, pithily, *על חד רייעול* (*ibid.*).

The express phrase for removing the precentor was, consequently, in Palestine *העביר*, *Jer. Ber.*, I, 5 (3 d):

¹ Cf. *Ber.*, 10 b: *אל יעמד אדם במקום גבוה ויחפול אלא במקום נמוך ויחפול*. An examination of *Tosefta Ber.*, III, 17 (p. 7) shows that this dictum is to be applied only to the prayer of the individual. Cf. L. Löw, *Gesammelte Schriften*, IV, p. 33.

² Cf. *Ber.*, II, 9 (p. 4); *Rosh ha-Shana*, IV, 5 (p. 212), IV, 12 (p. 214).

³ Cf., e.g., *Ber.*, 34 a, and *Mechilta*, ed. Friedmann, p. 45 b. Even to *Taan.*, 16 a, which has *מורידין* everywhere, the Siddur Amram quotes *וכשמעבירין לפני החיבה* (p. 35 a).

¹מעשה באחד ששחה יותר מדאי והעבירו ר' טעה בברכת המינים מעלין אותו; and in Babylon תעלה, *Ber.*, 29 a.

Now if we inquire into the meaning of the expression "to step up before the Teba," and into the precise extent of the prayers which were recited there, we are informed by all our sources and authorities—commentaries and translations, lexicons and archaeologies, are all in remarkable agreement with regard to this point²—that this expression is absolutely identical with "reciting the prayers aloud," and that it is used to designate all the functions which gathered in time about the office of the precentor. A general expression of this kind is not to be found in the older writings concerning the liturgy; there we find that every act and portion has each its own particular designation expressing its peculiar character. Moreover, it is to be considered that the accepted meaning of the expression agrees very well with the age of its interpreters, but by no means with the usages in vogue in the oldest religious service known to us. At that time the precentor stepped up to the ark at the moment when the "Tefilla" had to be recited aloud; it is for this reason that the expression עבר (ירד) לפני התיבה in the Talmud—no matter how much usage in the divine service may have altered during this period—has invariably the following meaning: to read aloud the Tefilla, i.e. that particular prayer which we erroneously designate the Shemone Esre.

All of the passages of the Mishna which we have previously quoted deal with this prayer. The key, however, to the explanation of the terminology is given us by the following passage: אמר רבא יום טוב שחל להיות בשבת שליו

¹ For the text cf. Ratner's אהבה ציון וירושלים, p. 29. According to this the term העביר denoted in Palestine both to send up a precentor as well as to remove him.

² The latest commentator in whom I find the correct conception is R. Hananel to *Meg.*, 24 b, where, however, the text is not well preserved. The oldest author who employs the false terminology is, as far as I can see, Isaac ibn Giyyat in הלכות, ed. Bamberger, p. 61.

צבור היורד לפני התיבה ערבית אינו צריך להזמיר של יום טוב שאלמלא
שבת אין שליה צבור יורד ערבית ביום טוב (*Shabbat*, 24 b).

What is meant by this account? In the oldest times there was no public worship in the evening; in the period of the Amoraim, however, it had already been introduced. In the evening services the "Tefilla" was spoken only softly; it was not repeated again by the precentor, with the single exception of Friday evening—an arrangement in favour of those who lived too far away, and who might very naturally come too late. Here the purpose in view was to prolong the services as much as possible. Nevertheless, the seven benedictions of the "Tefilla" were united in the repetition into one (ברכה אחת מעין שבע). On holidays, when punctuality was more the order of the day, the repetition was omitted; it was for this reason that Raba decided that the wording of those prayers on a holiday which fell on a Sabbath should be exactly the same as that of the ordinary Sabbath, no regard being paid to the holiday. His arrangement is still in force in the synagogues of all rites up to our own day.

The expression which Raba employs to designate the repetition of the "Tefilla" is שליה צבור היורד לפני התיבה ערבית. And particularly instructive for us is the reason he adduces: שאילמלא שבת אין שליה צבור יורד לפני התיבה ערבית ביום טוב. "If it were not the Sabbath, there would be no precentor to step up to the Teba on the eve of Yom Tob." What other function can here be meant? The remainder of the Maaribh prayer, the portions grouped about the Shema, and the Tefilla that must be softly spoken, are, as far as the form goes, the same for all days of the year. The difference between Sabbath eves and all other evenings consists exactly in this repetition of the "Tefilla," and that is called by the Amorite Raba in the fourth century, שליה צבור יורד לפני התיבה.

In the Gaonic period the original meaning of the phrase was thoroughly clear. Among the rules for divine service on the eve of the Day of Atonement, we find the following

passage in the Siddur of the Gaon Amram: ולאחר שמסיימין הצבור תפלת ורדי אין שם ירדת שלח צבור לפני התיבה אלא כסדר שבין ראש השנה ליום כפור לעמוד ולסדר סליחות ודברי תחנון ובקשה (*Amram*, 47 b). The meaning is quite manifest: exactly as is still the custom in our synagogues to-day, "Selihot" should be recited after the softly spoken Tefilla with the confession of sins. But by whom? Of course by a precentor "standing before the Teba"; this was exactly the same in Amram's time (ca. 880 C.E.) as in our own; but this is never designated לפני התיבה ש"צ לרדת, for this expression is used exclusively to denote the repetition of the "Tefilla." Such a repetition occurs in an evening service only in the case of the Sabbath, and thus our text very logically goes on as follows: אבל יום הכפורים שחל להיות בשבת לאחר סיום תפלת לחש יורד שלח צבור ואומ' ויכלו ומנן אבות כסדר כל שבת ושבת (*ibid.*).

Granting these preliminary remarks, it is clear that our entire conception of the Talmudic terminology in matters of religious services, as it has been accepted up to the present, must be revised. עבר (ירד) לפני התיבה does not mean to recite the prayers in a general sense; it is exclusively applied to denote "the reading of the loud Tefilla." In the oldest times, when only the latter was known, its general meaning is simply "to read the Tefilla in the congregation services." The technical term for the prayer of the individual, or for the softly spoken Tefilla of the congregation, was התפלל, Aramaic צלי. And thus, to translate these verbs and their derivatives, e.g. תפלה, צלוחה, with "pray, prayer, &c." is inaccurate; they are used in contrast to קריאת שבע, and mean only "to pray the Tefilla." The terminology is thoroughly correct and logical; quite as logical, one might likewise say, is also the misconception by which its meaning has for a thousand years been obscured. Once the expression is correctly understood, an altogether new light is thrown upon our sources. Thus, for example, it is only now that we understand why,

in the *Mishna Megilla*, לפני התיבה (ירד) עבר stands after שמע על שמו, but before ברכת כהנים. Likewise it is only now that we can estimate Amram's regulations in their full sharpness and precision. Concerning the Tefilla of the congregation, he says (7 b) ועומדין בתפלה ומתפללין; concerning the repetition, (10 b) וסדר תפלת שליו צבור היורד לפני התיבה (25 a) ועומד; with regard to the Sabbath services (25 a) ולאחר שמתפללין תפלת לחישה יורד שליו צבור (25 b), בתפלה ואומר ומתפללין בלחש 28 a; ואומר קדושתא שהיא אחת מעין שבע ועומדין 29 b; ואומר . . . יורד שליו צבור לפני התיבה ואומר ושליח צבור יורד לפני התיבה ואומר 30 a, בתפלת מוסף; for the 9th of Ab, (43 b) וזו התפלה שמתפללין ערבית ושחרית ובמנחה; for the New Year, (46 a) ועומדין בתפלת מוסף ומתפללין . . . יורד ש"צ לפני התיבה ואומר; for the Day of Atonement, (47 b) זו היא תפלת יחיד ויורד שליו צבור ואומר במנן ומחיה והמלך הקדוש מעמד שיש בו ריזוי וסליחות. Cf. 48 b and 49 a for the remaining prayers of Yom Kippur. In contrast to this, attention must be called to his wording when *no* repetition of the Tefilla occurs: (31 a) ובמוצאי שבת (31 a) עומד שליו צבור ופותח והוא רחום ומסדר התפלה כסדר ולאחר שמסיימן לחן שבועות מעריב . . . ועומדין (43 a); and (43 a) העצור תפלתו מקדש בתפלה ומתפללין.

B.

The phrase לפני התיבה עבר owes its birth to the circumstance that a precentor stepped up to the reading-desk only when the Tefilla had to be recited. Till that moment the congregation was seated; at the Tefilla it arose¹; hence . . . אלא, *Ber.*, V, 1. The Midrash regards the permission to utter the Shema sitting as a very considerable favour. The Mishna gives a poorly clad man the right to recite the Shema, because he can then remain sitting among the other worshippers; but it forbids his

¹ The Jews of Yemen maintain the custom of sitting on the ground during prayer up to the present day, cf. *Ibn Sappir*, I, 57 b.

stepping up to the Teba, because his appearance would lower the dignity of the congregation¹. After the "Perisat Shema" was over, the president of the congregation addressed one of the worshippers with *עבור לפני התיבה*², or with *בוא וקרב*³. The member thus addressed was forced very often to refuse the honour, because of his inability to recite the prayer from memory—*לינא חכם* answered Eleazar Hisma. As a rule, only such people were resorted to as had the appearance of possessing a certain amount of education⁴. It was regarded a sign of modesty and good breeding to refuse the honour at first, to wait for a second or a third request; it was, however, likewise unmannerly to persist obstinately in one's refusal, and so leave the congregation in a fix⁵. On ordinary days only one man stepped up to the Teba to read; on fast-days, however, two members of the congregation stood by the precentor's side, one to his right and one to his left⁶. *אין פוהתין משלשה בני אדם עוברין לפני התיבה בתענית צבור*. Later writings have interpreted this ordinance as binding for every day of the year, but this erroneous assumption is to be referred merely to the false reading of the text just quoted⁷. In Italian and Sephardic congregations, the custom has maintained itself up to our own day of having two members of the congregation stand by the side of the precentor on the Day of Atonement.

The "stepping up to the Teba" and the recital of the Tefilla constituted a totally new element in the divine

¹ *J. Q. R.*, XVIII, 597.

² *Lev. rab.*, p. 23; *J. Q. R.*, XVIII, 590.

³ *Jer. Ber.*, IV, 4 (8 b). The request *בוא והתפלל* is there declared to be false, and justly; for *רחל* can only be applied to the prayer of the individual, whereas here the reciting aloud before the Teba is meant.

⁴ *המזמיר בנביא* . . . הוא עובר לפני התיבה; cf. *J. Q. R.*, XVIII, 599.

⁵ *C. Ber.*, 34 a; *Jer.*, V, 3 (9 c) *א"ר יהושע דרומיא שלשה דברים רובן ומיעושתן* רע ובינוניתן יפה השאור והמלה והסדרו.

⁶ *Mechilta*, Amalek I, towards the end (ed. Friedmann, 54 b); *Pesikta*, ed. Buber, 22 a.

⁷ *Mas. Sof'rim*, XIV, 14: *היהביא לפני יחירי ההון* וכיצא בו אינו מן המובחר שיעמוד ההון יחירי לפני התיבה: *א"ר יעמרו שנים*. Cf. *Pirke de R. El.*, cap. 44.

service, and stood in no relation whatsoever to what preceded. The precentor of the Tefilla and that of the Shema were two different persons; and when there were several Tefillot for the same day, there were as many precentors¹. The Tefilla as a congregational prayer is considerably younger than the institution of divine services in general; likewise younger than the reading of the Shema. Sufficient evidence in proof of this can be readily found in the Talmud. In point of worth, it is regarded as much inferior to the Shema. While the recital of the Shema was looked upon as a Biblical injunction, the Tefilla was not regarded as such. Now if the great number of Biblical analogies which can be cited² for our prayer are examined, it will be seen that it would have been very easy to find some passage in Scripture on which to base the usage. A certain definite hour is enjoined for the reading of the Shema (עונה קריאת שמע), which must be strictly observed; neither study, nor attendance upon communal affairs, nor the duties of piety, relieve one from this obligation, whereas any of these occupations was sufficient to absolve one from the Tefilla³. The conflicting traditions as to the origin of the Tefilla are well known; it was very long in the making, and its extent and precise wording had not yet acquired fixed form. All these facts militated against its getting to be regarded as an old and inviolable institution.

This view of the matter enables us to grasp the meaning of an ordinance in the Talmud, which, on first sight, certainly appears quite remarkable and difficult in its way. Both Talmuds regard it as an act of great importance that the Tefilla should follow directly upon the Shema, and the highest rewards of Heaven are promised to him, who, without the slightest interruption, recites the Tefilla directly after the Geulla⁴. Whence this agitated apprehension as

¹ *Rosh ha-Shana*, IV, 7; *Taanit*, I, 2.

² Cf., e. g., *Mechilla*, ed. Friedmann, p. 28 a, ed. Hoffmann, p. 45.

³ *Berakhot*, 16 a; *Tosefta*, II, 6-11, p. 3 f.

⁴ *Ber.*, 9 b; *jer.* I, 1 (2 d): חזיקין לנאולה חסלה: . . . כל הסומך נאולה להפלה.

to a pause? Wherefore this extraordinary estimation of an act so seemingly trifling? The answer is to be found in a Baraita, which, more serious than the naïve statements of the Amoraim, runs as follows: אין אומרים דבר אחר אמת ויציב: סדר וידוי של יום הכפורים אבל אומרים דברים אחר תפלה אפי' סדר וידוי של יום הכפורים (*Tos. Ber.*, III, 6, p. 6). In order to comprehend this statement, it is necessary to enter upon the subject somewhat more afield.

Our text touches here upon one of the most vital problems in the entire domain of religious worship; a problem which, curiously enough, seems to have entirely passed unnoticed in the study of the Jewish Liturgy—namely, the prayer of the individual. Every true prayer is originally and above all something individual, personal, the expression of the feeling and of the yearning of a certain person at a certain moment. On the other hand, no true religion can do without congregational services, for this is the open expression of its very being and of its doctrine, as well as a criterion of its worth. Personal prayers are as various and manifold as are the temperament, the situation, and the particular wishes of the individual in question; from an objective point of view, they are not always religious and moral, no matter with what glow and depth of feeling they are uttered; and, finally, conflicts between the desires of different worshippers are not to be avoided. Thus a very difficult situation arises. The congregation cannot take all the subjective desires of the individual into consideration: the individual cannot rest satisfied with the quite general content of the congregational prayer. To obtain a satisfactory solution of this problem is the task of all religions, if these are not minded to subvert the foundations of all genuine religiousness. Well, how did Judaism solve this problem? If we seek the answer among the modern theologians, we learn that the Jewish religion in the period coeval with the New Testament had become thoroughly externalized and hardened; that prayer had become so stiffened and formalized by all sorts of iron-

bound rules and regulations, that there was no room left at all for true personal religiousness¹. Had the critics of the "religionsgeschichtliche Schule" made more of an effort to acquire a juster and deeper acquaintance with the history of the Jewish religion, and entered upon its study with less of a preconceived, prejudiced condemnation of it, they would surely have been more careful than to utter such an absurdity with regard to that religion which was the first to introduce the "religious worship of the heart," a regular prayer-ritual without sacrifices and without images. Judaism met the perplexity by granting the individual the opportunity, after the close of the congregational worship, of giving utterance to his personal longings and personal desires. It was a quiet prayer, for which neither form nor content was prescribed; the whole was entirely left to the pleasure and the mood of the worshipper. These are the *דברים* "words" of which our authority speaks; this is the prayer that later received the name *תחנונים* or *תחנון* "supplication,"—a prayer that could be lengthened out according to the worshipper's wish, as long as the longest prayer then known, namely, the Confession on the Day of Atonement.

The liturgy of the congregational services passed through many stages of development, and our Baraita here makes us acquainted with one of these. In the very oldest times the prayer in public consisted merely of the confession of faith, the epilogue of which was *אמת ויציב*. At that time the individual could exercise his private devotions immediately after the *אמת ויציב*. But now the Tefilla was introduced, and the congregational prayers thus lengthened, private petitions had to be therefore postponed to the end of the Tefilla. It is well known that religious customs are very long-lived, and that once grown up they are hard to obliterate. Thus, the exercise of one's private devotions after the "Perisat Shema" was a deeply rooted custom, and

¹ Schürer, *Geschichte*, II³, 486; Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums*, p. 156.

it was only after violent opposition that it could be overcome. This explains the energetic emphasis laid upon the necessity of praying the Geulla and the Tefilla immediately after each other, as well as the high religious worth ascribed to an act, the real religious value of which is very questionable.

This is a further proof of our assumption that the Tefilla is a later element in the divine service, and we understand how it is that a new usage was created with its recital. The prayer was now spoken by a new precentor, before unknown. He stepped forth from the midst of the worshippers up to the Teba, and recited the various petitions; the congregation listened in silence, and, at the close of each, joined in with Amen.

C.

With the introduction of the "Tefilla," petitions appeared for the first time in the Jewish ritual. In the oldest liturgies great care had been taken to preserve the individual character and content of each portion of the ritual, and to keep it strictly within its own confines. The "Perisat Shema" was devoted to the confession of faith, the Tefilla was now employed to embody the petitions. It is indeed true that the Tefilla did not contain petitions exclusively. In its form it was closely akin to the prayers preserved in the Bible, like those, e.g., scattered through the Psalms, in Daniel, Nehemiah, and the Chronicles. The typical architecture of one of these "normal prayers" is the following: by way of preamble a hymn is intoned, the present sorrow and suffering are then recounted, mention is made of the sinfulness of the times, and finally an appeal for help and succour is uttered, and thanks rendered, in anticipation, for the divine protection. The "Tefilla" is

built up exactly according to this pattern: hymn and thanks at the beginning and end respectively, the petitions occupying the middle. The outward pieces are as old as the oldest traditions concerning the Tefilla¹; the middle sections, or body of the prayer, were long in the making, their number increasing with time, their contents swelling in size, and the last finishing stage being attained only after a long period of development. As a result of this fluctuation, the former were regarded as fixed and unalterable, whereas the middle portions could make no claim in the popular estimate to immutability or inviolability, to any fixed wording or determined sequence². It is well known that in the Amoraic epoch the attempt was also made to demonstrate a well-planned sequence in the middle section too, but all such proofs are readily seen to be far-fetched. The only possibility of a reasonable account of the Tefilla in its final shape, is offered us solely by an historical survey of its gradual growth. For, although the development of the Tefilla began at a relatively late period, and lasted long, we must keep in mind the fact that the history of its contents and its general shape was, on the whole, completed quite early. The "Tefilla" for the Sabbath and holidays had assumed its present shape as early as the days of Bet Shammai and Bet Hillel; that for week-days received its final alteration about the year 100 C. E.

The only alteration of a later date is the division of the fourteenth benediction, which was made in Babylon in the third century. This change has been accepted by all rites to-day; but up to the year 1000 it was *not* accepted.

Rapoport's studies in this field have made it clear that Kalir's Kerobot are acquainted only with the eulogy אלהי דוד ובונה ירושלים; the Cairo Genizah has brought to light numerous other Kerobot for all sorts of occasions, all of which, without exception, follow Kalir in this point,

¹ *Tamid*, V, 1.

² *b. Ber.*, 34 a: אמצטיות אין להן סדר; cf. *jer.*, V, 4 (9 c).

and prove conclusively that in Egypt, the land of early Palestinian traditions, the old Palestinian Tefilla was in sway up to quite a late date.

It is only the wording of the individual benedictions that has changed; and in view of the numerous misconceptions on the part of strangers and opponents of our Tefilla, too much emphasis cannot be laid upon the saying of R. David Abudraham, that, namely, there cannot be the slightest question of a final and decisive redaction of the text of the Tefilla, and "that there are no two communities in the world employing precisely the same text." I have dealt with the difference in the traditions and with the most important variations in the wording, in my *Geschichte des Achtzehngebets*¹. But herewith "I do remember my faults this day": the very important text of the Palestinian Tefilla, which was published by Schechter² and Dalman³, escaped my notice; I shall therefore insert here some supplementary remarks of a more general nature.

The criteria which bespeak the Palestinian origin of this Tefilla have already been brought out by Prof. Schechter. It is likewise true that the form in which it lies before us now, is much older than any of those known up to the present. For example, the much more frequent usage of the exact wording of the Bible is very significant of this. In the first benediction we find *אל עליון קונה שמים וארץ*, borrowed from Gen. xiv. 9. The fifth contains but the single Bible verse, Lam. v. 22; the sixth has *מחה והעבר מנהיגנו מנגיד עינינו כי רבים רחמך*, which shows clearly the influence of Ps. li. 3-5; in the seventh and tenth, besides the Bible verses that are used, the additions of the current text are lacking; the twelfth has at the close *ימחו מספר ימיו וכו'*, Ps. lxix. 29; the eighteenth closes with *אם אמרנו וכו'*, Ps. xciv. 18, or, according to another version, with *כי טוב פעלת לחוסים בך*, Ps. xxxi. 20. Rather striking,

¹ *Geschichte des Achtzehngebets*, Breslau, 1903, pp. 49 ff.

² *J. Q. R.*, X, 654 ff.

³ *Die Worte Jesu*, p. 299 ff.

however, is the fact that the eighth benediction, רפאנו, which in our current text follows the Bible, is here somewhat differently worded.

Its priority to the current text is furthermore confirmed by the style. The third benediction, קדוש אתה ונורא שמך, is the old Palestinian version (= *Sifre Dt.* § 343); in the fourth, the first sentence, אתה חונן, is justly omitted, only the petition being present and prettily grouped in two parallel members. The twelfth, ברכת המינים, begins, exactly as it was quoted quite up to the close of the Middle Ages, with ולמשומדים, and contains in the middle that which we have been led to expect from the quotations of the Church Fathers: והנצרים. The thirteenth is conspicuous by its brevity; the absence of וקנים, however, which the old sources require, is striking. The wording of רחם in the fourteenth deserves the preference, if nothing but for its analogy with other prayers. The עבודה is that of the Palestinian Midrash Vayyikra Rabba; the setting of the last three pieces is much shorter and more succinct than that of our texts. Finally, it may be noted as of interest that in the first benediction בניהם ומביא גואל לפני בניהם is not yet present.

Nearly all the pieces show great brevity; many consist of merely two semi-distiches, and most of them have eulogies of but two words, and it would not be so very difficult to reduce the few eulogies consisting of three words to such of two. Is Prof. Joseph Dérenbourg's hypothesis concerning the original form of the Tefilla thus confirmed? Prof. Dalman has accepted it, and has made the attempt of eliminating the later elements out of the text. I cannot, however, withdraw my objection to this theory, and would warn against too elaborate pedantry in the treatment of an old prayer, especially as it did not take its rise at any one particular time and was never definitely edited. Thus, for example, מקבץ נרחי ישראל is so well attested by the Bible, by quotations, and by MSS., that all formal rules of criticism fail on being applied to such an example.

As for the archetype of the Tefilla, we are still very far from possessing it in this old text; the very fact that the various MSS. differ so widely from each other is evidence enough. Of the various versions of this text, I should give the preference to that designated B by Prof. Dalman. Compare, for example, the beautiful hymnic form of the second benediction: אתה גבור ואין כמוך חזק ואין זולתך משיב אתה הרוח ומוריד הגשם מכלכל חיים מחיה המתים ורב להושיע אתה גבור משפיל גאים: חזק ומדין עריצים חי עולמים מקים מתים משיב הרוח ומוריד הטל מכלכל חיים ומחיה המתים כהרף עין ישועה לנו תצמיה. The text of B is completely preserved in the Bodleian Heb. d. 55, fol. 33-34. I cannot omit to quote here the last benediction, which I think worthy of attention: ברכנו אלהינו ושמחנו אדונינו ושלומך: שים עלינו וברכת שלום (?) חשית) עלינו בא"י מעון הברכות, עושה השלום, and should not be rejected without earnest deliberation. B has almost throughout a succinct and acceptable wording; in the twelfth benediction, however, it has likewise the later addition לא ישובו לתורתך. The A version has also been preserved in several fragments, and besides these there are some variants; all of them—I have examined more than twenty—are more or less detailed elaborations of the original text. It is nevertheless quite impossible to reconstruct the original text for several passages. The great advantage gained by having so many varying texts, is the insight they afford us into the several intermediate stages of development through which the growth and elaboration of the Tefilla passed. The fragment T-S. H 9, No. 39 in Cambridge contains the Palestinian Tefilla up to רפאנו. The first and second benedictions correspond exactly with A; the third reads differently: אתה קדוש ושמך קדוש ולך יאמרו: קדושים קדוש כי שובו שובו אמרת לנו: ועל החשובה מראש הבטחתנו. Ibid., No. 38, contains the Tefilla in almost entirely the same shape as the ordinary version, only that the twelfth and fourteenth benedictions show the Palestinian form; the eleventh has after כבתחלה the addition

וישפטו עמך בצדק וענייך באמונה, which follows Ps. lxxii. 2, but is otherwise nowhere to be met with. In short, the more texts we examine the more assured becomes the fact that the text of the Tefilla has been dealt with somewhat arbitrarily, that copyists and precentors introduced changes of their own. Here allowance must be made for the warm imagination and the emotional temperament of the Palestinian Jews, who welcomed a change in the prayer, were relieved by variety, and would not have the same routine text day after day.

It is for this reason that in Palestine the Tefilla was supplemented and enlarged by *Kerobot*, with the enormous number of which we are acquainted only through the Genizah fragments. It seems that for each Sidra of the triennial cycle, *Kerobot* were composed, which were recited on the workdays of the week in question; not to mention those composed for particular occasions, such as *מילה*, *ראש חדש*, *ר"ה לאילנות*, &c. Furthermore, they did not hesitate in the slightest to displace portions of the Tefilla itself by more poetic elaborations. In my *Geschichte des Achtzehngebets*, p. 47, I have cited the fragments of an alphabetic abbreviation; the piece existed quite complete, and is preserved in a Genizah fragment at Cambridge. I here quote another similar fragment, a poetical diffused elaboration of the Tefilla¹.

יִצְחָק
[בר]ך א[תה יי] אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו אברהם ואלהי
יעקוב האל הגדול הגיבור והנורא אל עליון קונה^{ואלהי}
שמים וארץ וארץ תגיל בו בא ובתרועת מלך בו
מגין הוא לכל החסים בו ברוך אתה יי מגין אברהם
אברהם כנמת היו יהיה ונקוביו בגשם תחייה יי ממית
ומחייה ברוך אתה יי מחייה המתים המתים תעורר

¹ Fragment from T.S. collection, Box H 10, University Library, Cambridge. 18 x 17 cm. Square writing, rather rough. I owe the copy of the text to the kindness of Mr. Ernest J. Worman.

. שכיבה וקול דודי הנה זה בא אל נערץ בסוד קרשים^{רבה}
 ברוך אתה יי האל הך הקדוש למראש אמנה
 וימינו אש דת נתונה מפיו דעת ותבונה ברוך אתה^{וי}
 חונן הדעת ה' בימביני חצובים מיני אלפים
 ומיני רבבים שובו בנים שובבים ברוך אתה יי הרוצה
 בך בתשובה קביל עד דיהא למשכם תחתיך
 כנמת (סלחתי?) כידברייך ברוך אתה יי^ה

The question of the Piyut in the Tefilla is as yet far from being settled. Very many texts and readings will have to be published before we can come to a definite decision.

I. ELBOGEN.